

Appl. No. 09/955,879
Atty. Docket No. 8293R
Amdt. dated February 23, 2004
Reply to Final Office Action of October 22, 2003
Customer No. 27752

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A soft, fibrous material made from a single-layer nonwoven web, said nonwoven web having a basis weight of at least about 10 gsm, and a consolidation area of at least about 30%, wherein said nonwoven web is stretched resulting in said fibrous material having a fuzz removal value of less than about 0.30mg/cm², and a bending rigidity in a machine direction axis of bending of less than about 0.018g·cm²/cm.
2. (Original) The soft, fibrous material of Claim 1, wherein said consolidation is achieved by thermal bonding.
3. (Original) The soft, fibrous material of Claim 1, wherein said consolidation area is at least about 40%.
4. (Previously amended) The soft, fibrous material of Claim 1, wherein said fibrous material has a bending rigidity in a machine direction axis of bending of less than about 0.013g·cm²/cm.
5. (Currently amended) The soft, fibrous material of Claim 4, wherein said bending rigidity is less than about 0.009 g·cm²/cm.
6. (Previously canceled)
7. (Currently amended) The soft fibrous material of claim 1, wherein said material is comprised of a polymer selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, polyethylene-polypropylene copolymers, and mixtures thereof.
8. (Currently amended) The soft fibrous material of Claim 1 wherein said material is comprised of polyethylene/polypropylene bicomponent fibers.

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40 9. (Currently amended) The soft fibrous material of Claim 4 wherein said material is comprised of polyethylene/polypropylene bicomponent fibers.

41 10. (Currently amended) A laminate comprising the soft, fibrous material of Claim 1.

42 11. (Currently amended) A laminate comprising the soft, fibrous material of Claim 4.

13. (Withdrawn) A method for making a soft, fibrous material, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a nonwoven fibrous web;
 - (b) consolidating said nonwoven fibrous web to achieve a consolidation area of at least X%;
 - (c) repeating step (b) at least one time to achieve a consolidation area of at least Y%, wherein Y>X;
- stretching said consolidated fibrous material.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13 wherein said method reduces the bending rigidity of the fibrous material in a machine direction axis of bending by at least about 20% and does not increase the fuzz removal value of said fibrous material.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 14 wherein said bending rigidity is reduced by at least 40%.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 15 wherein said bending rigidity is reduced by at least 60%.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein at least one of said consolidation steps comprises thermal bonding.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 17, wherein said thermal bonding is by thermal point bonding via heated calendaring rollers.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 18, wherein all of said consolidation steps comprises thermal bonding.

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20. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein Y is at least 30%.
21. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 20, wherein Y is at least about 40%.
22. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein said stretching is by incremental stretching.
23. (Withdrawn) A method for making a soft, fibrous material having a plurality of discrete, spaced apart relatively high basis weight regions, said relatively high basis weight regions being at least partially surrounded by at least one relatively low basis weight region, said method comprising the steps of:
 - (a) providing a nonwoven fibrous web having thermoplastic portions;
 - (b) consolidating said nonwoven fibrous web at a plurality of discrete, spaced apart bond sites to achieve a consolidation area of at least X%;
 - (c) repeating step (b) at least one time to achieve a consolidation area of at least Y%, wherein Y>X;
 - (d) stretching said consolidated fibrous material.
24. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 23, wherein said consolidation is achieved by thermal point bonding via calendaring.
25. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 23, wherein Y is at least 30%.
26. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 25, wherein Y is at least about 40%.
27. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 23, wherein said stretching is by incremental stretching.